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December 9, 1999

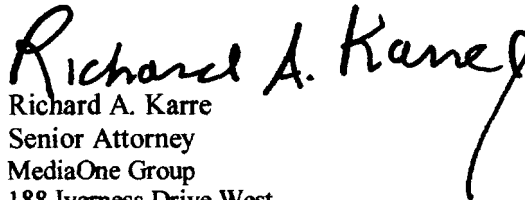
Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: *Ex Parte* Submission
CC Docket 98-184

Dear Ms. Salas:

Enclosed is an *ex parte* submission to the Chief of the Common Carrier Bureau and other individuals of the Commission's staff. This submission relates to the proposed merger of Bell Atlantic and GTE, CC Docket 98-184. The necessary copies are enclosed.

Respectfully,



Richard A. Karre
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enclosure

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December 9, 1999

Mr. Lawrence Strickling
Chief
Common Carrier Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 98-184
Bell Atlantic/GTE

Dear Mr. Strickling :

On March 11, 1999, MediaOne made an *ex parte* presentation to the Commission staff responsible for reviewing the proposed merger between Bell Atlantic and GTE. In that presentation, MediaOne suggested that, if the Commission is inclined to approve that merger, it should impose several conditions.

Those conditions included one related to local number portability (LNP). In it, MediaOne suggested that the Commission require Bell Atlantic and GTE to collaborate with competitive LECs to develop and implement processes for the implementation of LNP prior to the close of the merger. Those procedures would include –

- nondiscriminatory access to OSS functions to request and obtain LNP in a timely and efficient manner; and
- processes to ensure that the provisioning of number portability is timely and coordinated with loop cutovers.

Because of recent experience with Bell Atlantic's handling of LNP orders in Virginia, MediaOne believes even more strongly that the Commission should impose the conditions we proposed nine months ago.

Bell Atlantic relies solely on manual processes to handle LNP orders from facilities-based CLECs, such as MediaOne. Thus, after a MediaOne employee transmits a local service request (LSR) to Bell Atlantic electronically, via Bell Atlantic's graphic user interface (GUI), a Bell Atlantic employee must manually re-enter the transmitted data. The inefficiencies inherent in this process have caused Bell Atlantic to insist on a 48-hour turnaround for returning a firm-order commitment (FOC) after it has received an LSR for LNP; industry standards call for the return of an FOC within 24 hours of receipt.

Despite insisting on twice the time called for by industry standards (24 hours is standard), Bell Atlantic consistently fails to meet its own objective. In one recent period, Bell Atlantic missed a 48-hour turnaround on some 80% of MediaOne's LSRs. Moreover, Bell Atlantic often does not even come close to a 48-hour turnaround. One day recently, MediaOne had 23 customer orders due; Bell Atlantic had yet to return an FOC for 14 of those orders – a week after MediaOne had submitted LSRs. All of these orders obviously had to be rescheduled. Indeed, when Bell Atlantic's processing delays have invalidated a requested due date, Bell Atlantic sometimes unilaterally reschedules, thereby wreaking havoc with MediaOne's (and its customer's) plans.

When MediaOne has a problem with an LNP order, it must resolve the issue by means of a telephone call to Bell Atlantic's Telecom Industry Services Operations Center (TISOC). Getting through to the TISOC frequently involves long holding times, after which Bell Atlantic's representative will resolve only three orders; the MediaOne employee must then re-place the call, wait to get through to a Bell Atlantic representative, resolve three more orders, and so on.

To make matters worse, Bell Atlantic recently rejected 102 MediaOne LNP orders because MediaOne had completed a particular field on the LSR, as directed by Bell Atlantic's LSR requirements. When MediaOne inquired about the rejection, Bell Atlantic advised MediaOne – for the first time – that it had changed its requirements, so that this particular field must be left blank. Bell Atlantic refused to correct the LSRs, requiring MediaOne to correct and re-submit them.

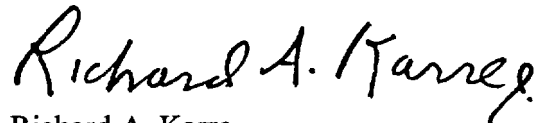
These problems obviously hinder MediaOne's ability to provision service for would-be customers. At best, Bell Atlantic's inept processing of LNP orders requires MediaOne to devote time and resources simply to ensure that its orders get processed. Frequently, however, MediaOne loses the prospective customer. Bell Atlantic processes its own retail orders electronically, so it has no need to work through the problems it imposes on its competitors.

Bell Atlantic has made no effort to implement electronic processes that would enable facilities-based CLECs to enter LNP orders directly, without the need for human intervention within the TISOC. Instead, Bell Atlantic attempts to increase the capacity of the TISOC by increasing the staff there, a time-consuming process, in which Bell Atlantic will always be playing catch-up as the volume of LNP orders continues to grow. Absent regulatory compulsion, Bell Atlantic is unlikely ever to rectify this situation, which materially aids Bell Atlantic's ability to maintain its virtual monopoly on local service.

Bell Atlantic's conduct substantially deters the provision of competitive local telephone service to residential customers. The result of this conduct accrues solely to Bell Atlantic's benefit. For these reasons, MediaOne asks that the Commission require Bell Atlantic to reform its LNP practices as a condition for being allowed to complete its merger with GTE.

Respectfully,

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